

Chapter 4

Section 2

CHAPTER SIX

URGE CONTROL

You have already learned to *Avoid* and *Escape* from dangerous situations, and you have learned that you can change your thoughts, but what about your physical urges? Sexual urges, like any other bodily urges (hunger, urination, and so forth) do not have to be satisfied to go away. After a while, they gradually vanish by themselves. Think of urges like waves, going up and down naturally.

This is important information, because it means that you can wait out your urges or do something else until your urge subsides. You have a *choice* whether or not to act on your urge, and if you decide to act, you can choose whether or not that act will be healthy or unhealthy.

There are also urges that come from your emotional needs, but may be translated into physical urges. For example, when you are feeling bored and lonely, you may have the urge to eat, even if you aren't physically hungry. You may have eaten just an hour before, but you crave some cookies. You remember the pleasure cookies gave you in the past and are attempting to capture that pleasure again. You don't even think about the negative consequences – how you will gain unwanted weight or spoil your appetite for dinner. You just grab more and more of them and wolf them down.

This need to satisfy an emotional need is called the *Problem of Immediate Gratification*, abbreviated simply to *PIG*. The PIG also applies to sexual urges. If you have been feeling some painful emotions, such as depression or anger, you may crave the sexual act you committed, because you remember the pleasure or release it gave you.

For example, some kids at school made fun of Yoshi. He felt depressed, unliked and stupid. He was walking home through the park when he saw a little boy standing by a tree. Yoshi had the urge to touch the child's penis. This is the PIG. If Yoshi did this before to try to feel better, he is more likely repeat the behavior. The PIG fits its name. It is a greedy animal. It wants to be fed over and over again. The more you give in to it, the more you crave that sexual release.

Before you can handle your PIG, you have to become aware of it and what gets it going. Recognizing the painful emotions and negative thinking that trigger the PIG, then becoming aware of the cravings or urges before you act on them are the first steps.

Using what you have learned earlier in this book can help you avoid feeding the PIG. These skills include 1) using *Avoidance* and *Escape* techniques to prevent you from going down your *Offense Chain*; 2) changing your negative thoughts and self-talk to more positive ones; and 3) finding more positive ways of satisfying your needs.

You don't have to wait until you feel the urge. You can plan ahead. You can avoid getting into high risk situations. You can do things that put you in a more positive state of mind. Getting plenty of sleep, exercising, and eating well all help you avoid the PIG.

If you are already having the urge or craving for an inappropriate sexual activity, you still do not have to act on it. There are a few ways you can help yourself stop. First, you can make an

Urge Control Contract of what you will do instead of or before acting on an urge. Second, you can carry a card with you at all times and read it to help you either to wait out the urge or make yourself safe.

The following are samples of an *Urge Control Contract* and an *Urge Control Card*.

URGE CONTROL CONTRACT

I, Dana Holly, recognize that I may sometimes have urges or fantasies to reoffend. I know that I am a valuable human being who cares about others, so I am making this contract as an insurance policy against reoffending. I hereby promise that when I have an urge, fantasy, or opportunity to commit a sex offense or any act close to an offense, I will do as much of the following as possible:

- 1) Stop or change my dangerous sexual fantasies by yelling STOP to myself and substituting a negative fantasy of being arrested or humiliated at school.
- 2) Tell myself it is not worth taking any chances, I can avoid or escape a dangerous situation, it is never too late until the deed is done, and I can succeed in not offending.
- 3) Write out a good and bad consequences chart about reoffending or not reoffending.
- 4) Think about what needs I am trying to satisfy through offending and try to find some other ways of satisfying them.
- 5) Change what I am doing to something safe that will take my mind off offending.
- 6) Read my Urge Control Card.
- 7) Talk to a friend, counselor, or probation officer or call a crisis hotline (such as child abuse, rape crisis, and so forth).
- 8) Go someplace where I cannot offend (to someone else's house, to the police or probation department, and so forth).
- 9) If I still feel the urge and these alternatives aren't possible, take 40 deep breaths, exhaling slowly.
- 10) If none of these techniques work, wait at least 20 minutes to allow the urge to go away.

Afterward, I will talk to my group and/or counselor about having the urge or fantasy, what I think were the causes behind it, and what I did to successfully overcome it. I will also reward myself for successfully following my contract by doing something positive I enjoy (like going to a sports event, concert, bowling, or movie).

I agree to read this plan over every Sunday night as a reminder to keep myself safe.

Signed:

Dana Holly

Dated:

September 25, 1993

URGE CONTROL CARD

When I get a strong fantasy, thought, or urge to commit a sex offense, I will sit down and carefully read over the following:

- 1) A fantasy, thought, or urge to reoffend is not unusual. It doesn't mean I have lost control or failed. And it doesn't mean I have to offend.
- 2) If I feel scared or guilty about my sexual fantasy, thought and/or urge, I will remind myself that I have power over them. I don't have to give in to them. I have other choices. I have other options that can satisfy my needs besides offending.
- 3) I will think of this as a learning experience. I will look at my life and try to figure out what has led up to the fantasy, thought, or urge. I will try to figure out what need I am trying to satisfy, and I will brainstorm all the other positive ways I can meet my needs.
- 4) If I am still having trouble, I will think about who I can call to talk to. I will look at the phone numbers of these resources on the other side of this card and call until I can talk to one of them.

Name and phone number of friend: Lee - 555-7913

Name and phone number of therapist: Sara Johnson
555-3629

Name and phone number of probation officer Mr. Frank Jacobs
555-4850

Hotline phone number Suicide Helpline - 555-1111

Above all, I will remind myself that I am in control.
An urge or fantasy does not make me a sex offender.
I am in control. This urge will pass.

Now it is time for you to make your own *Urge Control Card*. Copy the card above exactly on a 3" by 5" index card, fill in the names and phone numbers, and carry it with you at all times in your wallet. Don't forget you have it there.

Your next exercise is to make up your own *Urge Control Contract*. You can use the format suggested below or change it to suit your own situation. Fill in your own name, your own negative fantasy, your own reward, and your own times to reread the contract. Also specify what places are safe and who you will call to talk to or ask for help. Make sure you have more than one person to call plus a local hotline. The hotlines are important, because you are sure to reach someone all the time. Then sign and date your contract. Remember: this is a way you can help protect yourself.

EXERCISE 25. MY URGE CONTROL CONTRACT

I, _____, recognize that I may sometimes have urges, fantasies, or opportunities to reoffend. I know that I am a valuable human being who cares about others, so I am making this contract as an insurance policy against reoffending. I hereby promise that when I have an urge, fantasy, or opportunity to commit a sex offense or any act close to an offense I will do as much of the following as possible:

- 1) Stop or change my dangerous sexual fantasies by yelling stop to myself and substituting a fantasy of _____
- 2) Tell myself it is not worth taking any chances, I can avoid or escape a dangerous situation, it is never too late until the deed is done, and I can succeed in not offending.
- 3) Write out a positive and negative consequences chart about reoffending or not reoffending.
- 4) Think about what needs I am trying to satisfy through offending and try to find some other ways of satisfying them.
- 5) Change what I am doing to something safe that will take my mind off of offending.
- 6) Read my Urge Control Card.
- 7) Talk to (friend and/or relative) _____

 (counselor) _____
 or (probation officer) _____
 or call the _____ hotline.
- 8) Go to one of the following places where I cannot offend:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - or c) _____
- 9) If I still feel the urge, I will take 40 deep breaths, exhaling slowly.
- 10) If none of the above work, I will wait at least 20 minutes to allow the urge to go away.

Afterward, I will talk to my group and/or counselor about having the urge or fantasy, what I think were the causes behind it, and what I did to successfully overcome it. I will also reward myself for successfully following my contract by _____

I agree to read this plan every _____ as a reminder to keep myself safe.

Signed _____ Dated _____

So you now have a plan for coping with your fantasies, urges, or opportunities to offend. But how about coping with *emotions* that get you into trouble, like anger? You can make a plan regarding that emotion, much like the *Urge Control Contract*. In it, you can promise yourself to notice how you are feeling physically, so you will recognize that emotion coming on, and have various healthy alternative outlets planned in advance. Again, it is important to reward yourself for using the healthy outlets and to schedule a time for rereading the contract. A sample anger plan is shown below:

SAMPLE ANGER PLAN

This is Dana Holly's anger contract, which Dana has made to prevent Dana from inappropriately expressing anger.

- A. I recognize that I usually am thinking the following things before my anger develops:
 - 1) I think I am being picked on unfairly.
 - 2) I feel that I am not liked or respected.
 - 3) I feel misunderstood.
- B. I feel the following bodily cues that tell me I am angry:
 - 1) My muscles tense, particularly my face muscles.
 - 2) My voice gets louder and aggressive.
 - 3) My breathing is faster and shallower.
 - 4) I tend to pace.
 - 5) My energy increases.
- C. I will observe the following plan when I am getting angry:
 - 1) I will take a time-out or leave the place where my anger has come on and go to a safe place.
 - 2) I will try to change my self-talk to something more positive.
 - 3) I will talk to a friend, counselor, probation officer, or family member about how I am feeling.
 - 4) When I cool down, I will either tell or write a note to the person with whom I am angry about what I felt and why.
 - 5) I will talk about my anger in group.
- D. I will keep a journal of my angry feelings with the date, what the situation was, and rate the level of anger from 1 (slight) to 10 (extreme).
- E. If I did not follow this plan, I will give myself a negative consequence by not allowing myself to watch TV that night.
- F. If I followed this plan, I will reward myself by playing basketball this week.
- G. I will review this plan every Monday morning before I go to school.

Signed:

Dana Holly

Dated:

September 25, 1993

Now it is your turn to make a plan for a particular emotion with which you have had problems. Follow the outline in Exercise 26.

EXERCISE 26. MY EMOTION PLAN

BEHAVIOR ADDRESSED: Inappropriate expression of (name emotion) _____

NEGATIVE SELF-TALK (NEGATIVE THOUGHTS) CREATING THIS FEELING:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

PHYSICAL CUES TO HELP ME IDENTIFY THE EMOTION:

- 1) _____
- 3) _____
- 2) _____
- 4) _____

PLAN — THINGS I WILL DO TO MAKE SURE I DEAL IN A HEALTHY WAY WITH THE EMOTION: (Include who you will talk to)

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

RECORD OF THE EMOTION (JOURNAL OR DIAGRAM, AND WHAT IT WILL INCLUDE):

SELF-IMPOSED NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT FOLLOWING PLAN:

SELF-REWARD FOR FOLLOWING PLAN:

REREADING OF PLAN:

I will reread this plan (when and where) _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

None of your plans will help you handle your emotions unless you reread your plans frequently and follow them regularly. All training, whether for football or learning multiplication tables, takes time and effort. But when you think of the negative consequences if you don't change some of your problem areas, the time and effort you invest will be well worth it.

SUMMARY

In this chapter you had the opportunity to learn:

- 1) About the ups and downs of urges
- 2) How to deal with the *Problem of Immediate Gratification (PIG)*
- 3) How to write an *Urge Control Contract*
- 4) How to make an *Urge Control Card*
- 5) How to develop an *Emotion Plan* to deal with painful emotions

NOTES

CHAPTER SEVEN

UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

In the preceding chapters, we looked at behaviors, thoughts, and emotions in a very technical way. Now is the time to more personally look at *you*, who *you* are, and what *you* have experienced, thought, and felt. It is a time to bring up painful past memories, work through rather than ignore the feelings that resulted, and find out more about the person inside you.

Why is this important to preventing reoffending? Because until *you* come to terms with yourself, fully open up your emotions, resolve the issues that contribute to your offending, and build healthy self-esteem, you are at high risk of reoffense. In addition, you cannot possibly understand what your victims have felt if you don't understand and feel *your own* emotional responses.

A good starting place is to take an inventory of yourself. The inventory can help you see the many different sides of yourself, both on the outside and inside. What do you look like? How do you think? What do you feel about yourself and the world? Where do family and friends fit in? What are your goals, desires, and needs?

The exercise below gives you a format for a self-inventory. It is in no way complete, but you may begin to see yourself more clearly after you have described yourself in detail.

EXERCISE 27. SELF-INVENTORY

1) General Information:

Name _____ Age _____ Sex _____

2) Physical Characteristics:

Weight _____ Height _____ Eyes _____ Figure/Physique _____

Hair: Color _____ Do you like your hair? _____

Is it (circle answer): Natural/Dyed? Short/Long? Curly/Straight?

Appearance: How would you describe yourself? (Look in the mirror if necessary and select and write your answer from the following words: "very," "quite," "somewhat," or "not.")

Attractive _____ Ugly _____ Physically Fit _____

Large _____ Small _____ Fat _____

Well-coordinated _____ Clumsy _____ Ordinary _____

Unusual _____ Sloppy _____ Well-groomed _____

Casual _____ Weird _____ Skinny _____

Muscular _____ Weak _____ Graceful _____

How else would you describe your body? _____

How do you usually dress (conservative, grunge, wild, etc?) _____

What is your favorite feature? _____

Do others appreciate your appearance? _____ Who? _____

3) **Mind:** Which words or phrases describe your mental processes? (Select and write your answer from the following words: "very," "generally," "sometimes," or "not.")

School smart _____ Street smart _____ Sharp (quick) _____

Bright _____ Stupid _____ Talented _____

Clever _____ Deep thinking _____ Capable _____

Funny _____ Sophisticated _____ Imaginative _____

Mature _____ Childish _____ Aware _____

Naive (trusting, believing, unworldly) _____

Good sense of humor _____

Creative _____ (at what?) _____

What do you like most about your mind? _____

Do others appreciate your mind? _____ Who? _____

4) **Feelings:** Describe your feelings by writing in one of the following words: "very," "generally," "somewhat," or not."

Happy _____ Sad/Depressed _____ Angry _____

Frustrated _____ Strong _____ Weak _____

Emotional _____ Nervous/Anxious _____ Lonely _____

Loved _____ Well-liked _____ Independent _____

Needy _____ Bored _____ Lively _____

Self-centered _____ Caring of others _____ Unfeeling _____

Explosive _____ Calm _____ Tired _____

Serious _____ Light-hearted _____ Fearless _____

Scared _____ Self-confident _____ Insecure _____

Are there any other feeling words that would describe you? _____

What do you like most about the way you feel? _____

Are there ways you would rather feel? How? _____

Do others appreciate the good ways you feel? _____ Who? _____

What do they appreciate? _____

Describe some times when you really felt good? _____

5) **Behavior:** How would you describe your general behavior? (Select and write your answer from the following words: "usually," "often," "sometimes," or "not.")

Obedient _____	Respectful _____	Conservative _____
Wild _____	Irresponsible _____	"Cool" _____
Flashy _____	Ready to fight _____	Friendly _____
Aggressive _____	Stand up for self _____	Stand up for others _____
Daring _____	Honest _____	Trustworthy _____
Loner _____	Self sufficient _____	Sexy _____
Cheap _____	Classy _____	Defiant _____
Leader _____	Do what others want _____	Overly responsible _____
Cruel _____	Kind _____	User _____
Impulsive _____	Compulsive _____	Impatient _____
Loser _____	Winner _____	Good at sports _____
Good in school _____	Good lover _____	Good friend _____
Good worker _____	Enjoy playing around _____	Tease _____
Gossip _____	Can keep secrets _____	Talk back _____
Fight a lot _____	Steal _____	Cheat _____
Take or do what I want no matter what effect it has on others _____		
What other words or phrases describe your behavior? _____		

6) **Family:** Describe your family by writing in one of the following words: "mostly," "somewhat," "a little," or "not." (Include natural and step-parents, natural and step-brothers and sisters, grandparents or other relatives who also live with you, and adoptive parents. Do not include foster family members.)

Close _____	Distant _____	Important to me _____
Trustworthy _____	Well-adjusted _____	Dysfunctional _____
There for me _____	Not available _____	Good listeners _____
Rigid _____	Flexible _____	Smothering _____
Shaming _____	Hurtful _____	Mean _____
Abusive _____	Fair _____	Respectful _____
Embarrassing _____	Fun to be with _____	Boring _____
Caring _____	Smart _____	Stupid _____
Cruel _____	Insensitive _____	Loyal _____
Chaotic _____	Calm _____	Fun _____
Intellectual _____	Good at sports _____	Mechanical _____
Artistic _____	Clever _____	Angry _____
Law Abiding _____	Lawbreakers (who?) _____	
Religious _____	Alcoholic (who?) _____	

Successful _____ Drug users (who?) _____

Do any of your family members come to you for help or a listening ear? Who? _____

Are you a lot like any of your family members? If yes, who? _____

Are you very different from most of the others? How? _____

How would you change your family if you could? _____

7) **Your Life:** What is important to you? (Select and write your answer from the following words: "very," "quite," "some-what," or "not.")

Friends _____ School _____ Being in a group _____

Being liked _____ Being independent _____ Being popular _____

Affection _____ Love _____ Sex _____

Sports _____ Music _____ Other arts _____

Creativity _____ Building or making things _____ Knowledge _____

Money _____ Possessions _____ Travel _____

Career _____ Freedom _____ Rules _____

Being unique _____ Blending in _____ Partying _____

Personal growth _____ Politics _____ Security _____

Excitement _____ Variety _____ Consistency _____

Other things _____

What are you currently doing to get most of the things above that are important to you? _____

Are there things you could do to get the important things but aren't? What? _____

What seems to get in the way or stop you? _____

8) **Analysis:** Carefully read all you have written above. See how it all fits together. You may have a little better picture of yourself, who you are, how you think, feel, and act, your roots, and what is important to you in life.

What would you like to change? _____

What can you do to improve these things? (You may not be able to totally change some, but you often can make improvements, especially in your own thoughts, feelings and behaviors.) _____

9) **Goals:** For this last section, think of an imaginary but possible scenario describing your life as you would like it to be 10 years from now. Then write your answers to these questions:

Where will you be living? _____

Who with? _____

Will you be married or in a relationship? _____

Will you have children? _____

Will you have pets or stock animals? _____

How much education will you have? _____

What work will you do? _____

What will your money situation be? _____

How will you have fun? _____

What kind of social life will you have? _____

What kinds of projects will you do or be part of? _____

What kinds of relationships will you have? _____

Where and how will you travel? _____

What will your spiritual life be like? _____

How will you be helping others? _____

What will your most important possessions be? _____

Other? _____

Think of these as your goals. Goals are simply what you want your life to be like. You can achieve almost all of them if you put your energies toward the steps to attain them. Writing these 16 or more goals out separately on a piece of paper or card and tacking them up somewhere where you will look at them frequently is a good idea. It is important not to forget about them. You may at times modify them, as your desires change and as time goes on. But always keep them in the back of your mind, and think about them as you make decisions that will affect your life. By setting realistic goals and making good decisions, your life will have some direction, and you are less likely to act foolishly or self-destructively.

You are *not* a bad person. You do have a problem. You have done some bad things, you did hurt your victim (perhaps severely), and you have to make amends, change your ways, and be certain you never hurt anyone sexually again. If you stop and look at yourself and your actions, however, you can see that although you have done this and other hurtful things in your life, you have done some good things too. You are a person of real worth. Don't give up on yourself; remember that you can choose to do good things, just as you have sometimes chosen to hurt others.

EXERCISE 28. NEGATIVE VS. POSITIVE

NEGATIVE DESCRIPTIONS OF ME

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____
- 12) _____
- 13) _____

Look at these lists. Now think of what percentage of your time you spent doing the things that resulted in the negative descriptions of you and what percentage of your time you spend doing the things listed under positive descriptions. Write the percentage above each column. Realistically, most people spend more than half of their time doing positive things. So, you are mainly a good person. This is important to remember.

What you think of yourself is called *self-esteem*. Your self-esteem can go up or down depending on when and where you are. You gain your self-esteem from a variety of different sources – from your parents, other family members, friends, from what you accomplish in school and in your life. As we mentioned, your self-esteem was probably at an all-time low after you were caught. Studies have also shown that the self-esteem of persons committing sex offenses is often very low both right before they commit the offense and in general.

Building self-esteem is, therefore, a part of learning relapse prevention, as is planning how to protect yourself when you have low self-esteem. Low self-esteem – that is, feeling crummy about yourself – should be a red flag, indicating to you that you are entering a danger zone for reoffending.

Family members, teachers, friends and others give you both verbal and non-verbal messages about your worth as a person. Negative verbal messages include calling you names that make you feel bad about yourself (like “stupid”) or telling you negative messages about your behavior (like “You never do anything right”). On the other hand, positive verbal messages can raise your self-esteem. For instance, being called “attractive” is likely to make you feel confident and good looking, and being told “you are such a good student” makes you feel smart.

Non-verbal messages are things that are done or not done that make you feel better or worse about yourself. For example, if your father takes only your brother fishing or for visits, you would probably feel like he didn’t care about you, and therefore you must not be worth caring about. On the other hand, if your mother spent time and effort rebuilding and fixing up a car for you, you are likely to feel very valued. If she went to all that trouble just for you, you must be worth a lot.

The following exercise looks at some of the self-esteem messages you got from your family, friends, and people at school, what you think of yourself now, and some ways you can increase your self-esteem.

EXERCISE 29. LOOKING AT SELF-ESTEEM

1) Family:

A) What are some of the verbal and nonverbal messages you received from your family about your self-worth?

B) Who valued you most in your family?

How did that person show it?

C) Who did you look up to the most in your family? _____
Why? _____

Do you have some of those qualities? _____ Which ones? _____

2) School:

A) What messages did you get about your self-worth from most of your teachers? _____

B) Was there a teacher who really valued you? _____

What did that teacher do or say that made you feel that way? _____

C) How did that make you feel? _____

3) Friends:

A) What are some of the verbal and non-verbal messages you have gotten from your friends about your self-worth? _____

B) Do you have any friends who really think highly of you? What have they said or done which gives you that impression? _____

C) Do you have a friend you think highly of? How do you show or tell your friend what you think of him or her? _____

4) Your Experiences and You:

A) Write down something that happened in your life that made you feel very good about yourself (like you were a winner, smart, strong, capable, or creative). _____

B) Write down something that happened in your life that made you feel bad about yourself (like inadequate, powerless, worthless, or stupid). _____

C) How are you feeling about yourself right now? _____

Why? _____

D) List four things you have done or could do that would make you feel better about yourself.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

E) Whom do you look up to the most? _____ List four reasons you look up to that person.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Do you have any of these qualities? _____

Which ones? _____

Would you feel better about yourself if you had these qualities? _____

How do you know when your self-esteem is low? Usually you feel depressed, angry, frustrated, powerless, worthless, unloved, stupid, or any number of other painful emotions we discussed in the last chapter. When you check in on how you are feeling, it is good to see if the emotions are connected to your level of self-esteem. You will usually find that your emotions and your self-worth go hand-in-hand.

There are various ways to increase your self-esteem. The most effective ways are through personal achievement (the result of successful, positive risk taking) and helping others. Personal achievements could be something like trying out for the basketball team and making it. Can you think of some personal achievements or successful positive risks you have taken that increased your self-esteem? Or have you done some things that have helped others and made you feel better about yourself? Try to fit these types of experiences into your life. You will increase your feelings of self-worth if you do.

Your *self-talk* can also increase or decrease your self-esteem. For example, when you feel like you are worthless, if you say to yourself, "Nobody likes me, I'm stupid, I'm ugly, I'm a creep," you will feel much worse about yourself. On the other hand, if you say to yourself, "My best friend likes me, I am good at playing the guitar, I'm a kind person, I did something really nice for my grandmother yesterday," you will think better of yourself. Feeling better can include physical descriptions of yourself, reflections of what others think of you, and positive things you have accomplished.

The next exercise gives you the opportunity to increase the self-esteem of the person described.

EXERCISE 30. BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Fill in the blanks with positive statements the person could have said to himself or herself which would increase feelings of self-worth:

- 1) Marylou's relationship just broke up. She feels like she is worthless and will never have another relationship. What could she say to herself to raise her self-esteem? _____

- 2) Todd's step-father called him stupid and worthless. What could Todd say to himself? _____

- 3) Rico just got busted (arrested) for stealing. He feels really worthless. What could he say to himself? _____

- 4) Bill started a new school, and some of the guys made fun of the way he looks. He feels unpopular and worthless. What could he say to himself? _____

- 5) Word got out around school that Erin was sexually active with lots of guys. She feels that people view her as a "slut." What could she say to herself? _____

- 6) Shiro's best friend found out that Shiro is gay and won't talk to him. Shiro feels worthless and different. What could he say to himself? _____

- 7) Rick's teacher caught him cheating on a test and sent him to the office. Rick feels real crummy about himself. What could he say to himself? _____

- 8) Josh's teacher called him a "worthless piece of trash" when he talked back to her in class. _____
 What could he say to himself? _____

9) After Carol got an A on her biology test, a guy in Carol's class called her a teacher's pet and said she only got the high grade because the teacher had a "thing" for her. Carol knows the teacher likes her. She thinks, "I only got this grade because the teacher likes me. I'm not really that smart." What can she say to herself? _____

10) Carl just said something really silly to a girl he likes. He feels like a total fool. What can he say to himself? _____

11) Think of how you felt about yourself when you were arrested for your sex offense. What could you have said to yourself to help you regain your self-esteem? _____

In all the cases above, bad things either happened or were said that resulted in the persons' thinking badly of themselves. Sometimes nothing bad happens, or even good things happen, but we put ourselves down because of a past history of feeling badly about ourselves. For example, if you got a "C" grade on an algebra test, you could say to yourself, "Most people got better grades than I did." That is putting yourself down, and then you might feel stupid. On the other hand if you said to yourself, "Hallelujah, I passed. This was a really hard test, and I'm proud of myself. Maybe if I study even more, I can get a higher grade," you would feel much better about yourself.

Negative statements that minimize or discount the positive things you've done are put-downs. Thinking positively of what you have done – though without exaggerating – will help improve your self-esteem. These positive statements are referred to as *self-endorsing* statements.

In the following exercise, change the negative self-put-down statements to self-endorsing ones.

EXERCISE 31. SELF-ENDORSING STATEMENTS

1) Johanna won second prize at the all-city art competition. She said to herself, "I didn't win first place so I must be second rate." What self-endorsing statement could Johanna have made to herself instead? _____

2) Steve fixed the carburetor of his friend's car. He said to himself, "Anyone could have fixed it." What could he have said to himself instead? _____

3) Roderigo came from Mexico. He was fluent in English within three months. He said to himself, "I'm not especially smart. Anyone could have learned English in that length of time." What could he have said to himself instead? _____

4) Mike built a table in woodshop. He said to himself, "It doesn't look professional." What could he have said to himself instead? _____

5) Lee hurriedly cleaned his room up. He said to himself, "I don't know why I did this. It will just get messy again." What could he have said to himself instead? _____

6) Will was asked to be in charge of the Christmas party at his residential center. He said to himself, "I guess they couldn't find anyone else." What could he have said to himself instead? _____

7) Think of a time you did something pretty good or were complimented and discounted it. What happened, and what did you say to yourself that put yourself down? _____

What could you have said to yourself instead that would have shown appreciation for yourself? _____

Changing your thinking, as you have seen, can improve your self-esteem. But don't forget that *doing* positive things can work even better. If you try hard to achieve some worthwhile goal or go out of your way to go to the aid of someone less fortunate, you will probably like yourself a lot better.

Just how self-esteem fits in with the *Offense Chain* is an important part of the Relapse Prevention puzzle. In case you haven't already guessed it, everything in this book is aimed at keeping you from moving down that *Offense Chain* to another sex offense. Let us look at how it works.

If you feel badly about yourself (have low self-esteem), you are less likely to think of negative outcomes when a *SUD (Seemingly Unimportant Decision)* has to be made. Even if you have molested in the past, for example, with low self-esteem you are less likely to say, "No, I can't," when asked now to babysit. Your fear of saying "no" is because you don't want anyone to think badly of you. You think they will like you better or approve of you more if you say "yes."

Saying "yes" will place you in a *Dangerous Situation*. Because you feel bad about yourself, you are more likely to turn to the child, who looks up to you, for affection and sex. So you *Lapse*, fantasizing or taking that first step toward reoffending. It is easier to *Give Up* at that point, because you already feel you are no good, and think, "Why not go the whole way? I'm already a loser."

In Exercise 32 you will see how improving your self-esteem can help you prevent yourself from committing an offense, and how changing your thoughts or self-talk can affect your self-esteem.

EXERCISE 32. SELF-ESTEEM IN THE OFFENSE CHAIN

Write in what Andy could have said to himself to increase his self-esteem at each step of the way and that would prevent him from moving down the offense chain.

1) Seventeen-year-old Andy long ago molested his little brother. He just moved home after two years of living in a foster home. According to his probation rules, Andy is never at any time to be alone with any children under 16. Andy's mother knows the rules, but her babysitter didn't come in and she needs to go to work. She asks Andy to babysit. He says, "Mom, you know I can't do that." She angrily shouts, "You are a worthless good-for-nothing. You never help me with anything." Because he feels so bad about himself, Andy finally agrees (SUD). What could Andy have said to himself to feel better so he wouldn't have needed to agree to babysit? _____

2) After Andy agreed to babysit, his little brother tells him that he is the best brother in the world. Andy gives him a big hug and cuddles him on his lap (*Dangerous Situation*), because Andy thinks no one else in the world cares about him. What could Andy have said to himself to counteract his feelings of worthlessness and mistaken belief that no one else in the world cared or would care about him? _____

3) Andy begins to fantasize about molesting his brother (*Lapse*), because he believes he is so worthless that nobody else will ever want to have sex with him. What could Andy say to himself to counteract his negative self-image? _____

4) Andy unzips his pants and begins to take them off (*Giving Up*). He thinks about stopping and running out of the house, like he had learned in group, but feels so awful about himself that he figures, "I'm already no good and worthless. What's one more offense?" What could he have said to himself about his self-worth that might have prevented him from offending at this point? _____

You can see from all of the exercises we have done that lots of different thoughts, feelings, and decisions contribute to whether you relapse and reoffend or whether you can succeed in your commitment never to offend again. Knowing yourself, patting yourself on the back when you

have done well, not putting yourself down, and improving your self-esteem can all help you to stop at any point in your offense chain before you reoffend.

Now let us review some of the specifics of what you have learned in this chapter on *Understanding Yourself*.

SUMMARY

You can now:

- 1) Better understand who you are – your physical, mental, emotional, behavioral, and family characteristics, your life and what is important to you, what you want to change, and what your goals are
- 2) Realize that most of the time you are a positive, worthwhile person
- 3) Know more about the sources of your self-esteem – family, school, friends, and experiences
- 4) Know how to check in on your esteem level
- 5) Know some ways to increase your self-esteem
 - a) By personal achievement (or successful, positive risk-taking)
 - b) By helping others
 - c) Through positive self-talk
- 6) Understand how self-esteem fits into the *Offense Chain*
- 7) Recognize how increasing self-esteem through more positive self-talk can prevent reoffense

NOTES

CHAPTER TWELVE

FOR FAMILIES

Now is your opportunity to work together with your family, to share with them what you have learned about your offense chain and to practice your communication skills with them. It is important that you and your therapist schedule meetings to work together with your family. It is important for the members of your family with whom you now live, or will when you return home, to participate. Any additional family members are optional. Since they will be expected to do the exercises, you will need to make extra copies of some of the pages and exercises from this chapter for them.

Sharing your new knowledge is an important way to help your family to learn about offense behavior, to rebuild trust, and to help you with your relapse prevention program. It will also serve as a review of what we have covered in this workbook.

Families often have a hard time communicating, especially when one family member has sexually offended, and even more when the victim is also a family member. To help communication happen safely, these exercises should be done in a family session with your therapist. You will be doing the exercises along with the other members of your family.

If you sexually abused a brother or sister, you should have had joint therapy with that sibling to clarify issues for the victim *before* you sit down with the whole family to do this work. This work should be done *only* when the victim's therapist has agreed he/she is ready.

From now on, in the exercises, instructions to you offenders will be in italics, like this – *Tell your family . . .* Instructions to the rest of the family will be in regular type.

EXERCISE 52. BASICS OF RELAPSE PREVENTION

Part I. The Offense Chain

Make a big poster of your offense chain, showing the SUD, Dangerous Situation, Lapse, Giving up, and Offense behavior. Talk through your offense chain. Explain each step of your actions, how you were feeling, and what you told yourself (were thinking) at each step. You can use your offense chains from Exercise Numbers 1 and 20 to refresh your memory.

You will be helping your family to understand that behavior has many steps and that thoughts and feelings influence behavior. One of the best ways to learn is by doing, so they will break down their behavior into its steps, just as you broke down your offense into its steps on the offense chain. Even though they will be using the same process and the same language, this does not mean that the behavior they describe is as serious or illegal as your sexual offending.

Now it the family's turn. Each of you can do this. Help younger children who may have difficulty. They can do it too. Looking at the steps of an Offense Chain, apply them to something you did that you felt sorry about afterward. It is best to pick a behavior you have done more than once or fear repeating. For little kids, this can include misbehaviors at school such as being tardy, talking back to a teacher, stealing, getting into a fight, forgetting homework, or not doing it, and so forth. For teens and adults, it might include spending too much money on something, getting drunk, over-eating, blowing up at or being impatient with family members, etc. Think of a specific time you did this. Once you have decided on the problem behavior and situation, take it apart and see what led up to it following the Offense Chain format. (Sometimes it

is easier to start from the problem behavior and work backwards.)

The following is an example of an actual chain made by the 5-year-old sister of an offender. She had gotten into trouble several times at school for chewing gum.

1) **Seemingly Unimportant Decision (SUD)** (what started the whole chain — it is the seemingly innocent choice she made that put her in the “zone of danger”): taking gum to school so she could chew it afterward at her friend’s house.

2) **Dangerous Situation** (this is a spot where she had the opportunity to do the problem behavior): being in the classroom with gum in her pocket.

3) **Lapse** (this is either where she began to daydream or think about the problem behavior or did something that placed her much closer to doing the problem act): taking the gum out just to smell it, and thinking about how sweet it would taste.

4) **Giving Up** (almost doing the act, feeling like she has already crossed the line and there is no turning back): touching her tongue to the gum and figuring she already broke the rule so she may as well put it in her mouth.

5) **Problem Behavior**: chewing gum in class.

Now, using the same format, each of you look at your own problem behavior.

1) **Seemingly Unimportant Decision (SUD)** (what started the whole chain? — it is the seemingly innocent choice you made which put you in the “zone of danger”): _____

2) **Dangerous Situation** (this is the spot where you had the opportunity to do the problem behavior): _____

3) **Lapse** (this is either where you began to think about doing the behavior or did some act that was dangerously close to the problem behavior): Thought or fantasy _____

Act _____

4) **Giving Up** (this is the spot where you figure you’ve already failed and may as well continue): _____

5) **Problem Behavior** _____

The purpose of doing this chain is to learn about the steps of any behavior. Once we become aware of each step, we can change the direction, so the negative result will not happen. At each step in the chain, behavior can be changed to avoid the negative result. The earlier in the chain a safe alternative decision is made, the safer the person is from reoffending. You can help your offending family member by reminding him/her of the choices available at each step.

In the case of the gum-chewing student, if she had not brought the gum to school at all, she would not have been able to break the rule. Once she had the gum at school, however, she could have asked the teacher to hold it for her until the end of school, so it would be out of her reach. If she failed to do that, she could have given it to a friend to hold once she was fantasizing about chewing it and had taken a smell of it. And once her tongue touched it, she could still have thrown it away. Each of these actions would have protected her from doing the problem behavior.

She could also have changed her thinking at each step. In the morning before school, she could have thought, “I can

miss my gum for one day. It isn't worth being tempted at school." Once she had the gum at school, she could have thought, "I better find some way to protect myself from temptation. Maybe I'd better put my gum somewhere where I can't get at it." Once she began to daydream about it and unwrapped it, she could have thought, "I'd better get rid of this fast or I'll begin to chew it, and I don't want to get in trouble again." And at the giving up point where she actually put her tongue on it, she could have said to herself, "It's not too late. I can still stop myself by throwing it away."

Part II. Alternative Behaviors and Thoughts

Now it is your turn to explain what you could have done instead at each step of your offense chain. Also explain what you could say to yourself at the same time, that would help you make the correct choices. Remember to use **Avoidance** and **Escape**.

Family members: List the other behaviors and different thinking each of you could use to avoid your problem behaviors. Use the situation you described in Part I.

1) At the **Seemingly Unimportant Decision (SUD)** stage:

Different thought: _____

Other behavior: _____

2) At the **Dangerous Situation** stage:

Different thought: _____

Other behavior: _____

3) At the **Lapse** stage:

Different thought: _____

Other behavior: _____

4) At the **Giving Up** stage:

Different thought: _____

Other behavior: _____

Part III. Working on Family Issues

The most difficult part of this exercise is to apply this *Offense Chain* and *Relapse Prevention* model to find ways to change some situations or patterns at home in order to help the offender stop his/her offending behavior. While the offender is 100% responsible for his/her own actions, there may be other factors that could have influenced his behavior, and, if changed, can have a positive impact in the future. It is the awareness of these factors that can help the family help the offender. The family and offender can work together as a team to prevent reoffense. (You can either do this part of the exercise individually or as a group or groups, such as parents together, children together, or by females, males, or in age groupings, depending on how many of you there are.)

Think of what problems might have been (or positive things that weren't) going on in the family shortly before your adolescent family member sexually offended. How well were you communicating with each other? How often did the whole family spend time together? When one of you was having a problem or made a mistake, could you go to the family for help? What was the family's reaction when you did have a problem? How strict was the discipline in your family? How were the rules made? What happened when a rule was broken by a child? By an adult? Did you feel respected by the other family members, including both children and adults? What kinds of behaviors showed that respect? What was your work or school schedule like? Did you take time to have fun together? How often was alcohol used by family members? How often were tranquilizers or other mood-altering drugs (including prescription and street drugs) used by a family member? Did one family member get a lot more attention than the others? Did everyone have some privacy as well as time together? What happened when you expressed your feelings? What other issues were going on in the family? Talk about the answers to these questions with the therapist who is helping with these family sessions.

Write down a problem in your family using the *Offense Chain* format. Then write down things you could do to change the situation at various points in the chain. This format provides you with a way to catch problems early and head them

off, or, if they have developed already, to change them. For example, if the family problem was communication, you could look at it like this:

- 1) **SUD:** Everyone is busy with his/her own life and problems.
- 2) **Dangerous Situation:** Communication may break again down if something isn't done about the situation.
- 3) **Lapse:** Nobody has had time to stop and talk or listen for the past week.
- 4) **Giving Up:** You figure since nobody wants to talk to you, you won't talk with anybody, either.
- 5) **Problem:** Family members don't communicate.

Now let us look at what one child could do about the problem at one or more of the steps along the way:

- 1) Request a family meeting to talk about communication.
- 2) Sit down with a parent or with brothers and/or sisters and discuss the issue.
- 3) Get together with brothers and sisters and make a plan to help family members communicate.
- 4) Get someone to be an ally, to help approach others in the family.
- 5) Write a letter to parents and/or kids who aren't talking about issues and problems.
- 6) Make sure that he/she is openly asserting his/her communication needs.
- 7) Present the family members with a taped message requesting improved communication.
- 8) Call a therapist, counselor, other relative, or minister and request help.
- 9) If the situation seems hopeless, find someone outside of the home to talk to.

Use the same process for your family issue or problem, filling in the spaces below:

- 1) **SUD** (What is the family or one or more members choosing to do that may put it in a dangerous situation?) _____

- 2) **Dangerous Situation** (What negative or dangerous thing could now happen?) _____

- 3) **Lapse** (What is the first step toward the serious family problem that might occur?) _____

- 4) **Giving Up** _____

- 5) **Problem** _____

What could you do about this problem and at each step leading to it? Remember, the sooner you do something, the less serious the problem will be. List at least 5 solutions.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

The important thing to be aware of in all situations is that you all have choices. The choices are not always exactly what you want them to be. For example, you may not be able to get your family to be very communicative. But you have the choice of finding others to talk with, or of talking with one or more members of the family who are available, or of writing your feelings instead. The point is that everyone has choices.

When you see a problem beginning to arise and know it may affect the family member who has acted out sexually, it is important to either talk to that person or get a parent to talk to him/her, be there for him/her as needed, or suggest some alternatives. It's not your job to rescue someone else in your family. Each family member is responsible for his/her own behavior. But a little support can go a long way.

The most important change you can make is for each family member to communicate his or her feelings and needs. *Communication is at the cornerstone of a healthy family structure.* Even if family members cannot do anything about another person's feelings and needs, just listening to the other person can make that person feel understood and appreciated.

When someone is in pain, particularly, most of us want to help that person out of the pain. While it may be possible to make some kinds of emotional pain go away for a young child, older children and adults must handle the pain themselves. Instead of saying to them, "It could be worse," "That's nothing compared to what happened to me," "Don't think about it," or attempting to solve the problem for them, it is more helpful to listen and just be there for them. That gives them the strength and self-esteem to find their own solutions.

Sometimes families live together, do work and recreational activities together, but forget to talk to each other about what they think, feel, and need. They believe that since the family knows its members so well, they automatically know what you are feeling or needing. It is easy to feel ignored or abandoned when no one responds to what you think are clear signals.

The next exercise encourages communication on some touchy issues. You are going to need lots of extra paper, because each of you will be called upon to write something to every other family member, and you will need to duplicate what you write for each family member. This exercise should be done in a family session with the adolescent offender's therapist.

EXERCISE 53. FAMILY COMMUNICATION

1) **Family Appreciation:** Write down on separate pieces of paper what you really appreciate about each family member. In a family meeting, read what you have written out loud, then give the family members their papers. After everyone is done, each family member shares how these comments made him/her feel.

2) **Family Problems:** Write down on separate pieces of paper what bothers you most in the behavior of each family member. Be specific. (This can include things like "not listening to me," "bossing me around," "expecting too much of me," "drinking too much," "not doing chores," and so forth). Be brave! Next to each item, write what you would like that person to do or be like instead. Each writer will read the things that bother him/her, what he/she wants from that family member, then have the family member tell how the comments made him/her feel. The family member is not allowed to argue about what was written or get back at the person who wrote it, but just talk about how it made him/her feel.

3) **Communicating Offense, Offender and Victim Feelings:** Fill out your responses, then discuss and explain your answers in the family group. (To help with this exercise, make copies of the feeling list from Chapter Four for your family.)

a) What are your feelings about the sex offense that was committed by your son, daughter, sister, or brother?
Write your feelings down here. (If there was more than one offense in the family, write about each or about sex offenses in general.) (The offender writes about his/her own feelings about the offense.) _____

b) What do you feel about the offender? (The offender writes what he/she feels about him/herself.) _____

c) What do you think the victim must be feeling about the offense and him/herself? (If you have trouble with this, try to imagine yourself in the victim's shoes. Pretend you have just had the offense happen to you, or think of a time you had a similar experience. How would you have felt, or did you feel?) _____

4) **Becoming More Aware of Communication:** Each family member should answer the following questions, then discuss them in a family session.

a) Think of a time when someone in your family really **listened to you**.

- 1) Who listened to you? _____
- 2) What were you talking about? _____
- 3) Where were both of you at the time? _____
- 4) Did the other person stand or sit? _____ How close? _____
- 5) Did the person look at you all the time? _____
- 6) How was the person acting? _____
- 7) What made it easy to talk to the person? _____
- 8) What did that person say to you (how did he/she respond)? _____
- 9) How did it feel to be listened to? _____

b) Now think of a time when **you really listened** to a family member.

- 1) Who was that family member _____
- 2) What was he/she talking about? _____
- 3) Where were both of you at the time? _____
- 4) What were you feeling at the time (why did you want to listen?) _____
- 5) How was the other person acting? _____
- 6) Did the other person stand or sit? _____ How close? _____
- 7) Did the person look at you all the time? _____
- 8) How loud or soft was the person's voice? _____
- 9) What else made it easier for you to listen? _____

5) Improving Communication:

a) What steps can you take to make it easier for other family members to **listen** to you?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

b) What steps can you take to make it easier for the family members to **talk** to you?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

c) What are some ways the family as a whole could improve communication?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Discuss the ways each family member listed in part 5 and decide on four specific things the family will do together to improve communication and four specific things each of you will do individually. Also think of a way to get the family together to reactivate these plans if the family begins to slip back into poor communication. Write all of these down on a piece of paper and post them on a bulletin board, the refrigerator, or somewhere else where you all will see them. And add the reminder, in large letters: "We will take time to listen to each other." The results will be well worth the effort.

Often, in families where an adolescent commits a sex offense, there has been prior sexual or other abuse of the offender and of other family members. Some or all of the family members may have been victims. For example, 13-year-old Randy, who had molested his 5-year-old sister, eventually revealed that his 16-year-old brother had masturbated him when he was 9 or 10 years old. This was a molestation. When the 16-year-old brother was questioned, he revealed that he had only done what was done to him. He had been molested by some older boys on the block. As we talked about this with the whole family, Randy's 19-year-old brother said he had been molested by his uncle. Randy's mother divulged that she had been molested as a child by her uncle and cousin and raped by a stranger, and Randy's father admitted he had been molested by his older brother.

Even though these assaults happened in the past, it is important to talk about them openly. When victimizations have been put aside without talking through your thoughts and feelings about them, the feelings are held down. This prevents the victim from being able to feel these emotions in other situations or to understand what others may be feeling. It causes the victimized person to shut down and be emotionally distant from spouses, brothers and sisters, or children. When these emotions are not felt and shown appropriately, some victims act out their feelings in ways such as drug and alcohol abuse, violence, and so forth. Have you ever punched someone or hit the wall or slammed a door instead of saying, "I'm angry with you about..." This is an example of acting out feelings instead of talking them through.

In Randy's family, once the family members were able to talk about what had happened to them and about all of the embarrassment, shame, helplessness, anger, guilt, and even pleasure that they had felt, they were more open to how the other family members were feeling. Just revealing what had happened to each other and cleaning out these old wounds by dredging up old, buried emotions, improved their relationships with each other a lot. It helped them understand why they may have done ineffective, hurtful, or self-destructive things. People react to other people or events with hurtful behavior when they don't know how to talk about their feelings. Talking about their victimizations especially improved their understanding of their youngest son's sex offense.

The next exercise is your opportunity to look at your own victimization. All of us have experienced some type of sexual, physical, or emotional victimization in our lives. These experiences could have happened within the family or outside of it, and could also include such things as being beaten up at school, discriminated against by a teacher, robbed, treated unfairly, or let down

by a friend. If you have been victimized a lot, pick three of the most severe and significant times. If you have a lot of feelings, bad dreams, or are getting upset a lot in talking about victimization, you might need the help of a therapist for a while to work through your feelings. Ask the therapist who is working with the offender for a referral if you do not have a therapist of your own.

EXERCISE 54. PROCESSING VICTIMIZATIONS

1) Think back to some times in your life when you were victimized. Write down what happened and how you felt.

a) What occurred: _____

How you felt afterward: _____

b) What occurred: _____

How you felt afterward: _____

c) What occurred: _____

How you felt afterward: _____

2) In writing below, tell your perpetrator (of each victimization) what you feel about what he/she did to you and what you feel about that person.

a) _____

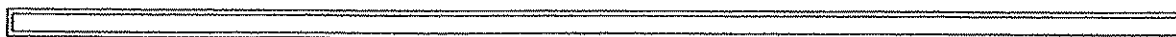
b) _____

c) _____

3) Think about how you felt when you were a victim, then write a brief letter to the victim of the adolescent offender in your family, telling the person that you understand how he/she might feel, and expressing emotional support and your regret for what the offender did. *(The offender can write the same letter, expressing his/her own regret.)*

Dear _____,

Signed: _____



Expressing Family Love and Affection: Humans thrive on expressions of affection. These can be verbal (such as telling someone you care about him/her), nonverbal (such as doing things for the person like attending their ball games, giving flowers, or baking cookies, or just being there for him/her), or physical (like hugging, kissing, or patting, or putting a hand on another person's shoulder).

Appropriate physical contact, in particular, is necessary for babies to thrive, and it is still needed by most adults. Yet, often, in our modern world, people get so busy or distracted that they forget to give a simple pat or hug.

Since the family can and should be the most important place to get appropriate affection, it is important to look at how your family functions in this regard. The next short exercise is designed to help you look at your family's ways of expressing affection, and encourage healthy demonstrations of love and caring. Each family member should do the exercise, then everyone should discuss the responses.

EXERCISE 55. SHOWING AFFECTION

1) How often have you expressed your affection toward your family members in the following ways?

TYPE OF AFFECTION	APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF TIMES DONE LAST WEEK
a) Hugged.....	_____
b) Kissed	_____
c) Patted	_____
d) Put your hand on person.....	_____
e) Put your arm around shoulder .	_____
f) (Other physical).....	_____
g) Done something special for	_____
h) Given a gift to	(what?) _____
i) Made something for	(what?) _____
j) Gone out of your way for	_____
k) Told the person you cared.....	_____
l) Said how important he/she was	_____
m) Took an interest in and listened to	_____
n) (Other)	_____

2) How often have persons in your family done these things with you in the past week?

TYPE OF AFFECTION	APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF TIMES DONE LAST WEEK
a) Hugged.....	_____
b) Kissed	_____
c) Patted.....	_____
d) Put your hand on person.....	_____

TYPE OF AFFECTION**APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF TIMES DONE LAST WEEK**

- e) Put your arm around shoulder . _____
- f) (Other physical) _____
- g) Done something special for _____
- h) Given a gift to (what?) _____
- i) Made something for (what?) _____
- j) Gone out of your way for _____
- k) Told the person you cared..... _____
- l) Said how important he/she was _____
- m) Took an interest in and listened to _____
- n) (Other) _____

3) For the next week, record how many times you do each of the following things. Try to do at least one of each for each member of the family, with the exception of g), h), i) or j), which do not need to be done quite as frequently.

TYPE OF AFFECTION**TIMES DONE THIS WEEK**

- a) Hugged..... _____
- b) Kissed _____
- c) Patted _____
- d) Put your hand on person..... _____
- e) Put your arm around shoulder . _____
- f) (Other physical) _____
- g) Done something special for _____
- h) Given a gift to (what?) _____
- i) Made something for (what?) _____
- j) Gone out of your way for _____
- k) Told the person you cared..... _____
- l) Said how important he/she was _____
- m) Took an interest in and listened to _____
- n) (Other) _____

Do what is comfortable, but if you seem not to be expressing affection, make an extra effort to show your affection appropriately. If everyone in the family tries to express their affection regularly in a variety of ways, family members will probably be happier with each other.

Inappropriate affection is physical contact that violates personal boundaries. Personal boundaries are limits that protect a person from harm. Body privacy is one of these personal boundaries. Every person is entitled to body privacy. Even babies are entitled to the privacy of not being poked, pinched, penetrated, or having their sexual parts fondled. Children should have privacy in the bathroom and while dressing. Even in play, nobody should grab a person's sexual parts.

Kisses should only occur between people who are very close and consenting. Children should never be forced to kiss anyone. Kisses between family members and with children should be totally non-sexual, not using tongues. They should not be placed on sexually arousing places, such as ears.

Sex offenders have broken through those personal boundaries when they committed their offenses. Consequently, boundary lines now must be even more firmly and clearly drawn. Families can help the offender not step over these boundaries. For example, it is *not* okay for the offender to take a little brother or sister to the bathroom at the mall while Mom is trying on clothes. Mom should not ask the offender to do this. If the offender takes a little brother or sister to the bathroom, the offender's boundaries are critically weakened. The offender will be making a *SUD (Seemingly Unimportant Decision)* by agreeing, and it will place him or her in a *Dangerous Situation* on the *Offense Chain*. It is important for family members not to ask the offender to do anything that will place him/her in a *Dangerous Situation*. Families as well as offenders must think ahead to the possible consequences of their requests and actions.

The following exercise can help the family see situations that could weaken the offender's boundaries and place the offender on the chain toward reoffense. It can help the offender reinforce his/her avoidance and escape responses. After each family member fills this out, discuss the answers in your therapy session.

EXERCISE 56. BOUNDARIES AND CONSEQUENCES

Part 1. In the spaces following each of the following situations, write whether you think the offender's boundaries could be weakened and what the possible consequences could be if the offender agreed to do what was asked. (*On the space following the italicized line, the offender will write what he could say and do if faced with these situations.*)

1) Sandy had previously molested a nephew. Late one night, when Sandy's father was doing the dishes, he heard his 7-year-old son Don crying in bed. He turned to Sandy and said, "Go see what's troubling Don." Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? _____

Possible consequences? _____

If you were Sandy, what would you say and do? _____

2) Guillermo was previously arrested for exposing himself at night around the apartments where the family lived. Late one night, Guillermo's older brother said, "The garbage really smells. Guillermo, will you take it out?" Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? _____ Possible consequences? _____

If you were Guillermo, what would you say and do? _____

3) Yoko had previously molested her younger brother by fondling him. Late one night, her older brother said, "The garbage really smells. Yoko, will you take it out?" Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? Possible consequences? _____

If you were Yoko, what would you say and do? _____

How does this situation differ from the situation in number 2? _____

4) Tony had molested his little sister Carla several years ago. One morning before school, Carla called to him, "Tony, the zipper on my pants is caught. Will you come here and fix it for me?" Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? _____

Possible consequences? _____

What could Carla do instead? _____

If you were Tony, what would you say and do? _____

5) Quazelle had been arrested for prowling (peeping in people's windows) at night. His mother came in with the groceries after work. As she was putting them away, she noticed that she had forgotten to buy bread, which she needed for the children's sandwiches in the morning. She had a splitting headache and wanted to go to bed, so she asked Quazelle, "Would you run over to the mini-mart and buy a loaf of bread?" Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? _____

Possible consequences? _____

If you were Quazelle, what would you say and do? _____

6) Yuri, a 17-year-old, was recently arrested for sex with a 12-year-old. Yuri's 12-year-old cousin Anna came for a visit. Yuri's grandmother wanted Anna to have a good time, so she said, "Yuri, take Anna to the show with you tonight." Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? _____ Possible consequences? _____

If you were Yuri, what would you say and do? _____

7) David had molested his little sister Sarah. Sarah was home with the chicken pox. Their mother had to go to work or she would lose her job, so she said, "David, I need you to stay home and babysit Sarah today. But make sure not to go into her room." Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? _____ Possible consequences? _____

If you were David, what would you say and do? _____

What could David's mother have done instead? _____

8) Lonnie had been arrested for molesting his brother Joey. The family was picnicking in the park. Lonnie's father said, "Lonnie and Joey, your job is to pick up the trash and put it in this bag, while I put away the rest of the food." Boundaries likely to be weakened or not? _____ Possible consequences? _____

What do you think about this example? _____

Part II. Now it's time for each of you to brainstorm some situations that might actually happen in your family. These situations should be ones where you ask the offender to do something likely to weaken the offender's boundaries and result in his making a *SUD* (*Seemingly Unimportant Decision*) that could put him in a *Dangerous Situation*. Write down as many as you can as fast as you can. (Use another piece of paper if you think of more situations than the space allows.)

- 1) _____

- 2) _____

- 3) _____

- 4) _____

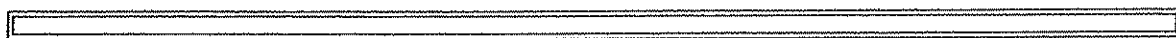
- 5) _____

- 6) _____

- 7) _____

- 8) _____

Now write: "I will not ask _____ (fill in the offender's name) to:" above this list. Make a copy and keep it where you can look at it often.



Sex is often confused with affection and other emotions. While sex can be a demonstration of love and caring between two people, it also can be a simple physical gratification separate from any love and caring. Sex is also confused in our media with a wide variety of products, emotions, and images. Particularly when a young person has been previously sexually abused, sex gets confused with practically everything. The offending member of your family will do the next exercise alone, and then will share it with you.



EXERCISE 57. RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN OUTLINE

With your therapist present, explain to your family how you mixed up sex with the expression of emotions and satisfaction of needs. Describe what was happening to you emotionally at the time of your offense and what needs you were trying to satisfy. Then tell your family how you will satisfy those needs in the future without offending again. Write down a plan to prevent relapse, sign it, and give a copy to your parents. Cover the topics on outline in the next exercise:

1) What I was feeling just before I committed my sex offense:

2) What I will do if I feel that way again (think of several things):

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

3) What I will do if I am asked to do something which is a **SUD** (Seemingly Unimportant Decision) and could place me in a **Dangerous Situation** (think of several things):

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

4) What I will do if I find myself in a **Dangerous Situation** (think of several things):

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

5) What I will do if I **Lapse** in thoughts or behavior (think of several things):

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

6) What I will do if I get to the **Giving Up** stage (think of several things):

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

7) Some of the alternative ways I will satisfy my needs:

- a) _____
- b) _____

- c) _____
d) _____

8) What I will do if communication breaks down in my family (think of several things):

- a) _____
b) _____
c) _____
d) _____

It is very important for parents, guardians, and other caretakers, no matter how busy, to listen whenever the offender comes to them with a problem related his/her *Relapse Prevention Plan*. For this reason, we ask them to enter into the following agreement. (Each parent, guardian, or other caretaker, signs a copy of this. Then post it in a place where it can be easily seen by the signer.)

EXERCISE 58. PARENTS' AGREEMENT

I am the (circle one) parent, guardian, or caretaker of (name of offender)

I hereby agree to listen attentively to my offending child whenever he/she comes to me with a problem related to his/her *Relapse Prevention Plan*.

I will do my best to maintain healthy communication within our family, including going to our therapist or former therapist if needed.

Signed _____ Dated _____

Signed _____ Dated _____

Dealing with sexual offending behavior in a family is probably one of the hardest things you will do as a family. Many other issues will come up that you might need help in resolving. When that happens, don't be afraid to call your family therapist (if you have one, or ask the therapist who has been working with your offending family member to refer you to a family or individual therapist who has experience in working with families involved in sexual abuse).

It is also important that the family does not feel blamed for what the offender has done or will do. The offender is responsible for his/her own actions. The offender has the ability to choose what to do and what not to do. The family is a helper, to support and encourage the offender in making the most positive choices.

There are many additional topics you may think of and want to talk about, including roles, discipline, sexuality, other boundaries, re-uniting incest families, alcohol and other drugs, and so forth. This is just a selection. Add the additional topics that are important to you and your family. Expect that everyone's attitudes and beliefs may not be the same, but use this as an important place for all of you to be able to clarify and reason out your values.

SUMMARY

You were able to increase your understanding of the following ideas in this chapter:

- 1) The basics of Relapse Prevention
- 2) Choices available to change destructive or self-destructive behavior
- 3) The importance of home support for the adolescent offender
- 4) The importance of good communication in the family
- 5) How victims feel
- 6) Appropriate ways of showing and increasing the expression of affection while respecting boundaries
- 7) The misuse of sexuality by adolescent offenders



ENDING THOUGHTS

Completing this workbook took a lot of time and effort, but it is time and effort well spent. You can congratulate yourself on a major accomplishment. But it is not enough just to read the material and do the exercises. You have to weave your learnings into your life and practice them every day. It is hard to break old habits, but, with practice, you can create new, positive habits to replace them. *Relapse Prevention*, in a nutshell, is a process you can use throughout your life.

You might want to check out how thoroughly you absorbed the material. In the Appendix at the back of this workbook is a "Relapse Prevention Quiz." Take it and have your therapist go over it with you. You can also give the test to your family. It's a good review.

Keep in mind that you have many choices ahead of you. You have the power to make decisions with either positive or negative consequences for you and for others. The more you increase your self-understanding, understanding of others, communication and social skills, and think clearly and positively, the safer you will be from reoffenses and the happier you will be in general. And engrave the words *Avoidance* and *Escape* permanently in your memory. They can help you out of all kinds of dangerous situations.

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High Risk Factors

What makes up a high-risk situation?

A high-risk situation is any set of circumstances that trigger you to enter your cycles and possibly reoffend. Anytime you are close to reoffending, you are in a high-risk situation. A high-risk situation is made up of high risk factors. **High risk factors are people, places or things that make it easier for you to reoffend.** High-risk situations are dangerous for anyone around you and yourself. They require immediate action to stop you from reoffending. You may have heard the phrase "in your cycle" in the past. If you are in your cycle, you are in a high-risk situation.

High-risk situations are important to recognize. Knowing a high-risk situation means understanding the factors that make a situation risky "inside and out." When you are done with relapse prevention group, you should be able to answer all three questions listed below about high-risk situations.

1. Why is it high risk?
2. How do you know it is coming?
3. How do you get away from it?

How do you figure out what a high-risk situation is?

A high-risk situation is made up of high risk factors. **High risk factors are people, places or things that make it easier for you to reoffend.** There are five categories of high risk factors:

1. The first type is **high-risk places**. These places are those that put you where reoffending is easy. If someone molests children, then babysitting is a high-risk place. If someone rapes girls, then cruising in a car at night is a high-risk place. If your offense involved alcohol, then being around people drinking is a high-risk place. High-risk places are places not to be. All high risk factors happen someplace.
2. The second type of high risk factor is **high-risk thoughts**. High-risk thoughts are risky thinking or thinking errors. In previous groups, you have identified patterns of thinking or risky thoughts that helped you offend. When you have high-risk thoughts, you are justifying reoffending. Inappropriate fantasies are high-risk thoughts. These thoughts help you forget about victims, your family, and the consequences of reoffending.
3. The third type of high risk factor is **high-risk feelings**. High-risk feelings are feelings that encourage thinking errors or start you searching for risky thinking. These are the emotional trigger that can put you in your cycle. For instance, you may get angry at your mother. You feel cheated, angry and hurt. You think that nothing matters anymore because no one cares about you. It is easy to see that the next thought might be about reoffending.
4. The fourth type of high risk factor is **high-risk behaviors**. These are your behaviors that lead you to the high risk factor and keeps you in it. You may start using alcohol or drugs. You might be fighting or feeling angry. Your behavior may be giving you free time with children. You might brag to the other guys about sex with a girl. These are behaviors that can lead to reoffending quickly.

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5. The fifth type of high risk factor is **other people's behaviors**. An example of this factor is your buddies asking you to go drinking. A parent may use pornography. A girl may slap you. Another couple may have sex in front of you. You are not doing the high-risk behavior but someone is enabling you to. Enabling means making it easier for you to reoffend. Easier may be justifying your risky thinking or helping you find a victim.

How do I figure out what my high-risk situations and high risk factors are?

You will find high-risk situations and factors in your homework and discussions from groups you have completed while at PJCF. It is sometimes helpful to start by reviewing assignments from previous groups, especially the denial assignment and your completed cycles assignments. As you go through these assignments, make a list of anytime you see a high risk factor. Then, think about what the other members of your group said when you told your offense story, positive criticism that group members gave you, issues your counselor said were import for you, and things you learned in your family sessions. Add these possible high risk factors to your list. After you have made the list, complete the high risk factor assignment.

High Risk Factor Assignment:

Directions:

The first step in creating prevention plans is to make a list of high risk factors for each of your criminogenic needs. At the top of each list, write the criminogenic need. Then, underneath the need name, list at least five high risk factors for each need. If you think of more than five factors for a need, it will make it easier for you to generate a list of high-risk situations later in group. Remember to think about a variety of high risk factors. Try to list one of each type of the high risk factors described above for each criminogenic need. When you have completed this assignment, present it in relapse prevention group and ask the other group members for feedback. When the group leader approves your lists of high risk factors, they will sign below and you can begin work on your list of high-risk situations.

High Risk Factor List Approvals:

Group Facilitator: _____ Date: _____

Primary Service Provider: _____ Date: _____

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Relapse Prevention

Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

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Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

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Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

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Relapse Prevention

Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Criminogenic Need: _____

High Risk Factors:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

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High Risk Situations Assignment:

Directions:

The next step in creating prevention plans is to write down possible high-risk situations for each of your criminogenic needs. At the top of description, write the criminogenic need. Underneath the need name, fill in the situation description. Then, list the warning signs for each high-risk situation. There should be at least three. When you have completed this assignment, present it in relapse prevention group and ask the other group members for feedback. When the group leader approves your lists of high risk factors, take it to your counselor and they will sign below. When your counselor signs off on your list of situations, you can begin writing relapse prevention plans.

High Risk Situation Approval:

Group Facilitator: _____ Date: _____

Primary Service Provider: _____ Date: _____

Situation # ____

Criminogenic Need: _____

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Warning signs of this high-risk situation are:

1.
2.
3.

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Relapse Prevention

Situation # ____

Criminogenic Need: _____

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Warning signs of this high-risk situation are:

1.
2.
3.

Situation # ____

Criminogenic Need: _____

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Warning signs of this high-risk situation are:

1.
2.
3.

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Situation # ____

Criminogenic Need: _____

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Warning signs of this high-risk situation are:

1.
2.
3.

Situation # ____

Criminogenic Need: _____

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Warning signs of this high-risk situation are:

1.
2.
3.

Section IV
Relapse Prevention

Situation # ____

Criminogenic Need: _____

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Warning signs of this high-risk situation are:

1.
2.
3.

Situation # ____

Criminogenic Need: _____

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Warning signs of this high-risk situation are:

1.
2.
3.

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RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN

Name: _____

This plan addresses the following treatment need(s):

Part I:

The warning signs of this high risk factor are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



DO THE THREE STEP: BE QUIET – GET SPACE – CALM DOWN

Describe the situation:

I think/feel _____

because _____

My risk is to _____

Get Information:

My thoughts are:

RISKY THOUGHTS	LESS RISKY THOUGHTS

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My victim(s)' thoughts, feelings and/or beliefs are:

VICTIM	THOUGHTS/FEELINGS/BELIEFS

Are there any other facts?

Set A Goal:

I want _____.

☐ My goal is positive.

☐ My goal is realistic.



Choices/Consequences:

What are the consequences for others (emotionally, physically, socially, sexually)?

What are the consequences for me?

+/-	Choices	Outcomes for me	+/-	Outcomes for others	+/-

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If I lapse and pick a negative choice, I can still get out of my cycle by recognizing the following:

My grooming and setting up behaviors:

My possible maintenance behaviors:



The following detours are five positive choices that I think are going to be the most effective in helping me reach my goal:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

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Relapse Prevention

Part II:

Role-Play

Evaluate:

I would say:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The plan worked. | <input type="checkbox"/> The plan did not work. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The outcome was positive. | <input type="checkbox"/> The outcome was negative. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The detour was realistic. | <input type="checkbox"/> The detour was unrealistic. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nobody got hurt. | <input type="checkbox"/> Somebody got hurt. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am closer to my goal. | <input type="checkbox"/> I am not closer to my goal. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would use this in real life. | <input type="checkbox"/> I couldn't use this plan. |

Feedback I received from the group was:

Written plan approval: _____

Signature

Date

PSP plan approval: _____

Signature

Date

Role-play approval: _____

Signature

Date

Comments: _____
